

CREATIVITY

Many follow a career path that is mainstream, failing to act on their creative inner soul. I am one of those, not that I have not had fun and good times along the way and not that I'm complaining. But I often wonder – what if I had pursued a different path. What if I had acted on my creative nature (ok, let's assume that I have – or had - a creative nature). Where would that have led me? Would anyone have been interested? Would I have been a success? I may never know. Then again, do I really know what awaits me in the future? So as I was thinking about this, it occurred to me that I know some really talented people who stepped outside the mainstream and used their creative or artistic natures to go in a different direction – they opted out of the ordinary to attempt the extraordinary. So this year's holiday basket is an homage of mine to people I know who have done some wonderfully unexpected – at least to me - things. Jealous am I? In a way. But more than that I am in awe of what my friends and family have accomplished.

ZACHARRY'S

Many years ago I had the opportunity to work with Elizabeth Roberts and Cooper Estates from London in connection with their United States real estate investments. My former partner, Bob Hayhurst (former only because of his premature death many years ago) introduced me to Elizabeth and her family, and together we worked on many real estate transactions in California. Working with Bob was always an experience as it was first class all the way, including a ride on the Concorde to London for a critical meeting with Elizabeth and the company. Of course with Bob there was always time to experience London in his own inimitable way.



Eventually Elizabeth tired of the activities of Cooper Estates and “retired” to her farm in Scotland. Whereupon she and her family (including Ely and her husband Jim) developed the concept of Zacharry's – “we flavour food, drink, bath, beauty and home products with aromatic spruce tips from our own organic registered (Soil Association) forest in South Lanarkshire, and essential Scottish spruce oil from the Highlands.” You can read more about Zacharry's in the greeting card and spruce history book that

Elizabeth enclosed with the Spruce Essential Oil and Zacharry's No. 1 fragrance that are lovingly wrapped by this special friend of mine in a wonderful jute bag. And you can check out Elizabeth's website for further information on the future development of their spruce products and what the future might bring – as well as all of the other creative and interesting accomplishments of this incredibly talented and interesting woman - <http://www.crookedstane.com>.

LEN'S PENS

Lenny Howard is a cabinet maker working for Taylor-Made Builders in Northport, Maine. So woodworking is in his blood. Lenny is a classmate of my wife's in Searsport, Maine, and that is how I came to meet him, at high school reunions and just because I like hanging around



Belfast and Searsport, Maine (especially at Rollies Bar & Grill). Unbeknownst to me (well, known by me since we have been friends on Facebook and my wife surprised me with a pen made by Lenny), he developed a passion for creating pens made from various wood products. Or as Lenny calls them in his brochure – “fine hand-crafted writing instruments.” And that they are. So I am thrilled to be able to include in the holiday basket an example of these beautiful pens. They make a great gift, so don’t hesitate to check out his collection at <http://picasaweb.google.com/toolmanlh/LenSPens#> and contact Lenny to order more.



THE DIVINE MISS ABI

Abi Roberts’ search for her show business mother began with viewing the movie, *Beaches*, and ended with the making of a film about her search for Bette Midler when she finally encountered the Divine Miss M in Las Vegas. Yes, Abi is the daughter of Elizabeth (see above) and is an incredible singer, comedian and improvisationeer (is that a word?). Wonderfully talented and encouraged by my former partner Bob Hayhurst, Abi has pursued her show business dreams. To celebrate her regard for her show business mother, Abi recorded the CD “Beached” featuring many of Bette Midler’s songs as well as her original compositions “Turn the Lights Back On” and my personal favorite “Every Girl Should Have a Gay Best Friend”. To know Abi is to love her and to see her perform will bring tears – mostly from laughter. If she comes to a comedy club in your town (c’mon Abi, plan your tour) be sure not to miss her. I know that you will enjoy the CD – and the movie of her “search” that are included in the basket. To learn more about the life and times of Abi Roberts see – www.abiroberts.com.



WINE LOVERS/WINE MAKERS

I like to drink wine. On occasion and in moderation of course. To make a good wine is an art, as well as a science. I’ve included wine in my holiday baskets in the past, but this is the first time I’ve included wines made by wineries owned by friends – Harrison and Molly Lebowitz, who own Snow Farm Vineyard (www.snowfarm.com) and Bill Sweat, who, along with Donna Morris, owns the Winderlea Vineyard and Winery in Dundee, Oregon (www.windelea.com) .

I became friends with Harrison and Molly almost by accident at an American College of Mortgage Attorneys meeting in Santa Monica last year. With New York and New England roots and a winery in Vermont, we immediately hit it off. Molly is the real estate lawyer; Harrison runs the winery (although in his former life he was an assistant attorney general for Vermont). A short time after the meeting, Harrison came out to California to be with his son, who, as one of the top high school quarterbacks in the country for South Burlington H.S., was





attending the Steve Clarkson Quarterback Camp. Harrison brought along a bottle of his wine and once I tasted it I knew I had to include the Snow Farm wines in the holiday basket. Snow Farm Vineyards, founded in 1996 by Harrison and Molly as a way to keep farm land working, is Vermont's oldest commercial vineyard and grape winery. We selected the highly rated (87 pts., Wine Spectator) 2008 Vermont Vidal Blanc ice wine for the basket and ice wine fans are sure to enjoy it. Also included is the winery's Snow White, a 2009 medal winning white. Harrison is also a noted author and you may enjoy his book "Go East, Young Man" - <http://www.amazon.com/East-Young-Man-Harrison-Lebowitz/dp/1440473617>.

Winderlea Vineyard and Winery - <http://www.winderlea.com> became a passion and second career for Bill Sweat and Donna Morris in 2006 when, tiring of life in the financial industry, but in love with Pinot Noir, headed west to the place where Pinot Noir is a delicacy – the Willamette Valley of Oregon. In Dundee they bought the former Goldschmidt Winery and rechristened it as Winderlea, a wonderful boutique winery. In an article on Avalonwine.com the winery was called "a diamond in Oregon Wine's Gold Coast" - <http://avalonwine.com/Winderlea-Vineyard.php#axzz17IAO0naH>. Wouldn't we all like to retire to a life of a winemaker, though I suspect that Bill would give a somewhat different perspective on that.



My first contact with Bill was a telephone message not too long ago asking me to call him and that it was something about Bates College. When we connected Bill, as President of the Bates Alumni Council, informed me that I was "elected" to the Council, which was news to me since I didn't run for the position. Nevertheless, since I rarely say no to anything like that, and since, having sent two children to Bates, my passion for the place continues unabated, I accepted the "election" and have enjoyed my experiences with Bill and the rest of the Council. When I discovered that Bill owned the Winderlea Vineyard and Winery, well, I just had to try the wine. It was wonderful and immediately I knew it had to be included in the holiday basket. So if you enjoy really good Pinot Noir you will enjoy the Winderlea Estate Reserve Pinot Noir 2008 (a year rated as a Classic by Wine Spectator [95-100 pt.]). And to show the diversification of the winery, also included is their "French-style" Chardonnay from 2008. For the real estate mavens, you will be happy to know that the wine is made in a LEED certified building shared by 9 wineries.



COLLEGE A CAPPELLA

Specifically, Bates College a cappella. The Friday night a cappella concert, featuring all the five college a cappella groups, is a much anticipated annual event at Parents' and Family Weekend at Bates College. The Lewiston Maine middle school auditorium is filled to the rafters and if one is not there well before start time, one will be standing in the rafters. We started attending the concerts during our daughter Shayna's ('08) time at Bates and always brought along our son, Ethan, who also decided to go to Bates ('11). Ethan always watched the groups with great interest. Ethan was always musically inclined, playing guitar and writing songs, but we had no idea that he had any desire to be in one of the groups. Until, that is he called one day and said "Dad, I'm in the Crosstones. I was the only male they took after the auditions." After I expressed my surprise, I asked how he did it. He said, in a very low voice, "I used my bass." And he fit right in with this "fun-loving group of coeds" known for their "engaging stage performances."



Over the course of the last couple of years, the Crosstones have been working on producing a new CD. In the midst of finalizing the recording, the hard drive holding the only recordings crashed, leading to an extended and expensive enterprise involving me, by partner Bob Infelise (whose son was in the group) and the group itself to "rescue" the recordings. At long last completed this fall, the Crosstones held a CD release party at homecoming at Bates in October. This papa is proud to include the CD (entitled "Lost and

Found" for good reason) in the holiday basket. If you like a cappella at all you cannot help enjoying this CD. But don't stop there. Several of the group's performance's are up on youtube – some from the CD and several current "hits." Here is a link to two of them, one from Homecoming 2010 – "Broken Hearts/Empire State of Mind" (note the solo by my son in the middle) - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oR4Eqqxb9v0> and another, the youtube favorite from Parents' and Family Weekend 2008 "I Want You Back" - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Sp11WxppUw> But all you need to do is search "irawaldman" on youtube and you can find many more of this talented group's wonderful performances. If you think I am proud of the Crosstones and my son, you are right. I hope the pride is justified.



MY DAD THE ARTIST

You can live with someone your whole life and not know what hidden talent they have. That was true of me and my father. He spent most of his life working in the garment industry in New York. Since we lived in New Jersey, it was up at 5:00 AM to catch the first train into New York and then back home by 6:30 PM. Tiring. Weekends during the summer were spent at the swim club when he did not drive to the City to work on Saturday morning. And raising 4 boys was no easy picnic for him and my Mom. So it surprised me no end when he and my Mom, having moved to Palm Desert to retire, signed up for an art class. There they met another retired couple and



together they painted. Eventually the talk got around to their sons. “My son is a partner at a real estate law firm in Los Angeles” said my mother. “My son is a partner at a real estate law firm in Los Angeles”, said the other mother. The discussion continued until they realized that Gary Glick and I worked at the same firm. They became fast friends.

I didn't pay much attention to my father's work to be honest about it, at least I can't remember doing so, until he died in 2001 just after my 50th birthday. I collected the paintings together for his funeral and was stunned by their beauty. He only did 8 or 9 paintings, mostly from memories of his several trips to Italy, his life in the desert and his love of nature. They are family treasures.

A couple of years ago a friend of mine, Josh Stein, who was at Latham & Watkins at the time, was gracious enough to give me a set of note cards that he had made from his father's paintings. And that was the inspiration for creating the note cards that you find in the basket. Honestly, they only provide an indication as to how truly beautiful the originals are. We also worked with Harrison and Molly Lebowitz to create a custom label utilizing one of my Dad's paintings for the Vidal Blanc ice wine, which, for me, makes that wine extra special.



My regret is that my Dad did not take advantage of his talent at a younger age. My delight is that he ultimately did so, yet he may not have known how good of an artist he was. But through his paintings and the note cards, my family will always know and I hope that you will too.

LADY PICASSO

All children at some point are compelled to draw and paint and the parents ooh and aah over the “talent” of their child – which is forgotten as sports and studies take over their daily lives. There was a time, however, in the life of our daughter, Shayna, when my father’s artistic ability, having skipped a generation, suddenly appeared, as she attended an art class at age 10 or 11. Most of what she did was interesting. But one painting she did was more than interesting. It captured one’s eye and would not let go – The Painted Lady. Framed and in a place of honor in my office, it is the one piece of art in my office that commands attention and draws many comments. I don’t know what she “saw” that caused her to interpret a woman’s face in quite the way that she did or how she constructed the shapes in such a Picasso-esq way. The Painted Lady is now attached to the mini-canvas included in the basket.

Shayna never painted again after she did The Painted Lady. Her eye for detail never changed, but her interest in, and knack for, fashion soon took over – art expressed in a different way. Still, I wish she had kept at it. But as my father proved, if you have the innate creative juice, you can pick up the easel and brush later in life and fulfill your artistic dreams. I hope Shayna will do just that.



FINAL THOUGHTS AND A HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON TO ALL

It took much effort to put this basket together. It could not have been, would not have been done without the encouragement of my former assistant Kathleen Martin, who, once I had the concept, was all over the idea and pushed to make it happen, especially with all of the little additions to the basket. She was ably assisted by my daughter, Shayna, who it should be known, selected the LL Bean bag and its color, which is the “basket” into which the treasures reside. The two of them allowed me to do something creative with the creativity of others.

We wish you all a wonderful, joyous holiday season and a terrific New Year.



**SHAYNA AND
ETHAN WITH
SANTA – SEEMS
LIKE YESTERDAY.**

